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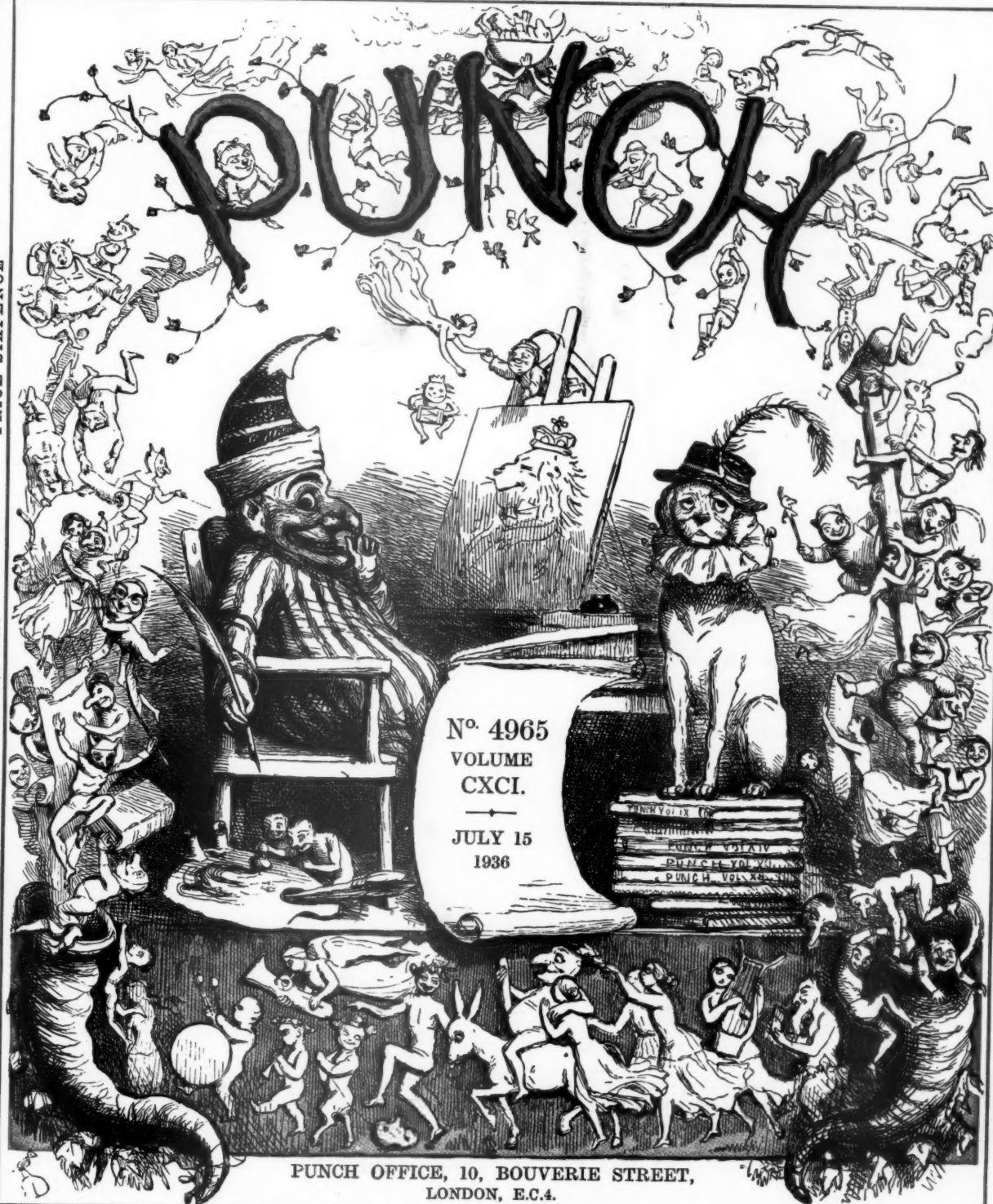
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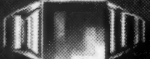


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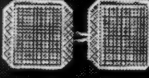



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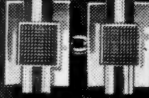





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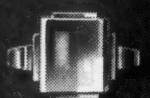
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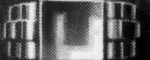
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## THE AVERAGE MAN

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Charivaria.



TROMBONE-PLAYERS are said to practise more persistently than any other musician. They just have to be prepared to go to any lengths.

★ ★ ★

A railway booking-clerk says a lot of people waste his time by asking where

they can go for a certain amount. And we suppose he is too polite to tell them.

★ ★ ★

Cold coffee is now said to be a cure for rheumatism—as well as for coming down late for breakfast.

★ ★ ★

An explorer claims to have discovered an island in the Pacific where the wind always blows. For that matter that's all it ever does over here either.

★ ★ ★

An M.P. points out that, although some pea-pickers earn only eighteen shillings a week, they never complain. They have of course very little to complain about.



A Southend-on-Sea father told the magistrate that he could not control his eleven-year-old son. It was even said that the boy had actually threatened to run away to sea.

★ ★ ★

An author considers that there is nothing worse than trying to shave with a razor after a woman has sharpened a pencil with it. It is evident that he hasn't tried to write with the pencil.

★ ★ ★

Last year, it is stated officially, the record number of nine hundred million apples was consumed in Great Britain. Far be it from us to question statistics, but we cannot help pointing out that this works out at nearly three million per day—and there aren't three million doctors to keep away in the whole country.

★ ★ ★

The sands of the Season, it is observed, are running out. But the season of the sands is coming in.

★ ★ ★

A phrenologist has classified fifteen hundred different kinds of heads. A correspondent says that after a regimental reunion dinner he had all of them.

VOL. CXCI.

A City man wants to know how he can avoid being pestered by flag-sellers. An almost certain cure is to wear a tray with flags on it.

★ ★ ★

A doctor has stated that the big toe is useless. So there's evidently one man left who takes a cold bath—and enjoys it.

★ ★ ★

A row of houses has collapsed in the Midlands. Apparently some mischievous person had snipped the wireless aerials.

★ ★ ★

We hear of a *really* unique old-fashioned cottage. It appears that teas aren't served there, however long you wait.

★ ★ ★

An American wears a suit of clothes with only one pocket. Its chief disadvantage is that even a child can out-fumble him.

★ ★ ★

A newspaper correspondent points out that dance-tunes seldom become popular in Germany until they are somewhat *démodés* over here. A notable example is of course "Danzig With Tears in My Eyes."

★ ★ ★

"Some people show execrable taste in their choice of houses," bewails an architect. They *will* keep on looking to their "Laurels"!

★ ★ ★

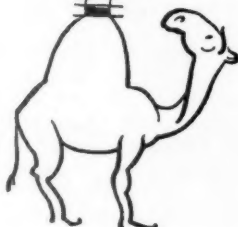
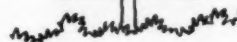
A nature-writer reminds us that grass-snakes multiply rapidly in summer. This naturally makes them easily distinguishable from adders.

★ ★ ★

We wonder if the Munich professor who has classified two hundred and seventy kinds of club bores included in his classification persons who classify two hundred and seventy kinds of club bores?

★ ★ ★

A hatter complains that a man, after spending three hours in his shop trying on bowlers and soft-felt hats, eventually purchased a boater. The last straw, in fact.



D



### "Fools Make Feasts, etc."

Now noon-day suns are piping hot  
And every bird that wings the air  
Comes hurrying to my garden plot  
To feast upon the summer fare.

The painted jay devours his fill  
Among my young and tender peas;  
The pigeon plies a busy bill  
On newly-planted cabbages.

Forgetful that 'neath winter's frown  
I fed them with a lavish hand,  
The tits and chaffinches swoop down,  
An eager and voracious band.

The blackbird that from every bough  
Poured his spring lyric to the skies  
In greedy silence gorges now  
Upon my ripest strawberries.

In vain the net is spread, their art  
Delights to circumvent all checks;  
They know I shall not have the heart  
To wring their tuneful little necks

And that, should they be caught, the sole  
Result of their intended crime  
Will be a freely-scissored hole  
Through which to pass another time! H. C. B.

### I Had a Little Motor-Car.

ABOUT a mile from Crowsfoot the car, which up till then had been running as sweetly as only a three-year-old can, began to make spluttering noises and altered her gait to a series of convulsive jerks. I slipped the clutch and roared the engine up, which some think beneficial, and I moved the ignition-thing backwards and forwards, but it didn't do any good.

"She's not herself," I said to Margaret.

"Sounds a bit bronchial," said Margaret. "Have you tried moving the ignition-thing backwards and forwards?" I gave her a look.

"What good would that do?" I said, reasonably enough. "It only advances and retards the spark; surely you know that?"

Women have such perfectly extraordinary notions about machinery.

At Crowsfoot we found a garage and explained just what the trouble was. "One moment we were humming along," I said, "with that smooth, effortless speed which is the hallmark of the Hodman Family Four, the next she was coughing and spluttering and—well, and spluttering. It was most extraordinary."

"Coughing and spluttering, was she?" said the man.

"Yes," I said. And I added "Fit to bust herself," because these local men are rather apt to try to pooh-pooh one's complaints if one isn't firm with them.

"Sounds like the carb," he said. "Was she spitting?"

I considered the point.

"I don't think I'd call it spitting," said Margaret, who is sometimes just a tiny bit inclined to interfere in matters she really knows nothing about. "Wouldn't you have said it was a sort of hiccup—a kind of interrupted 'hup,' you know? Only with a choke in it?"

"Yes," I said. "Or splutter."

"Might be the ignition," said the man, conceding a point.

I threw my mind back into the immediate past. Had we given him all the information at our disposal? After all, it was hardly fair to expect him to set things to rights unless he had as accurate an account as possible of what had gone wrong.

"There was a kind of golloping noise too," I said at last.

The man looked grave.

"You'd better leave her with me," he said in a kindly tone. "Come back in a R's time and I'll see what I can do."

Crowsfoot Church is unique in some respects and so is the coffee supplied by the Misses Angelica at the "Dainty Tea Rooms," but on the whole we were glad when the R was up. The garage man threw away his apple as we came up, and we stood round the open bonnet while he showed us the sights. Then he started the engine and roared her up. He roared her as loud as any sucking dove—louder in fact. I never heard such a clatter. I judged she would have been doing a hundred-and-sixty on the open road.

"All right?" shouted the man, squeezing another forty out of her.

"Magnificent," I yelled. "Not a splutter."

About five miles out of Crowsfoot the car, which up till then had been running as sweetly as any car will when it has just had its carburettor cleaned out and its plugs looked at, began to make spluttering noises (a sort of hiccup, some would call it, only with a choke in it) and altered her gait to a series of convulsive jerks.

"Sounds like the carb," said Margaret.

I kept quite calm. "Listen," I said. "We must think this thing out. We know there's nothing wrong now with the carburettor or the plugs. Very well, then, what's left? Take the process from the beginning. First of all the petrol has to come from the tank. We ought to make sure it's doing that. The outlet pipe might be blocked—a mouse or something. You see what I'm driving at?"

"Is it easy for mice to get into the petrol-tank?"

"No," I said slowly, "it isn't *easy*, but you can't tell with mice. They get into the tubes of Westinghouse brakes and stop expresses. And that's nothing. I read once of a man who unscrewed the cylinder-head of his car and found a bee buzzing about inside one of the cylinders."

"Heavens!" said Margaret faintly. "We'd better drive to the nearest vet."

Instead, we drove on, bucking horribly, to Snake's End, where I gave the garage proprietor a full and frank account of our difficulties. About a mile on the further side of Crowsfoot, I told him, the car, which was, as he saw, a specimen of the Hodman Family Four (Real Riding Comfort for the Man of Moderate Means), had suddenly started spluttering and, in a word, coughing. At Crowsfoot both carburettor and plugs had received every attention, but five miles further on the spluttering, or yes, as some said, hiccuping, had begun again. It was, I said, most extraordinary.

"My husband thinks there may be a mouse in the petrol-tank," said Margaret.

Of course it is no use talking to garage proprietors about Westinghouse brakes, so I simply let him have his laugh out. When he had finished he said he would have a look round; it might be the points. "Give me half-an-R," he said.

The church at Snake's End is said to be very fine.

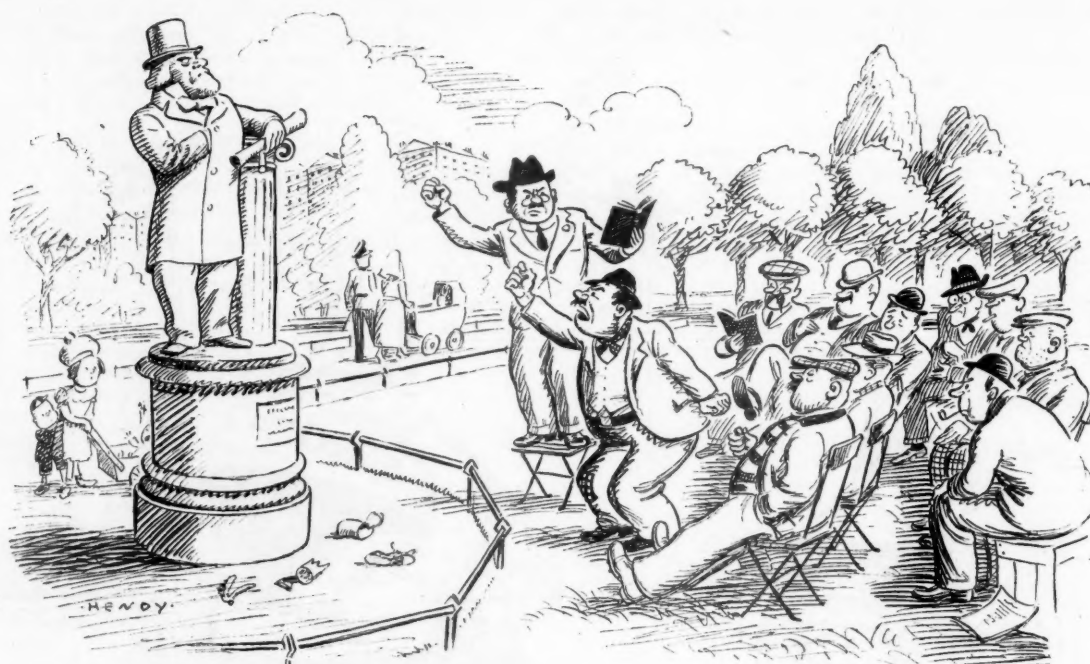
About a mile-and-a-half beyond Snake's End the car,





### STILL DICTATING.

"YOU CAN COME OUT NOW AND JOIN THE OTHERS; I'VE PUT THE CANE AWAY."  
"SHAN'T, UNTIL YOU SAY I DIDN'T DO IT, AND GIVE ME MONEY TO BUY SWEETS."



SUMMER SCHOOL FOR HECKLERS IN A LEFT-WING MUNICIPAL PARK.

which up till then had been running with all the ardour of a Hodman Family Four when it has just been presented with a brand-new set of points, began to—well, you know what it did.

"Oh, dear!" said Margaret.

We crawled painfully on until we came to a blacksmith's forge, and there I descended.

"Have you got a great big sledge-hammer?" I asked.

"R," said the blacksmith.

"Then would you mind catching this—this Hodman Family Four a great big wallop with it?"

He seemed a stupid sort of chap.

"What for?" he said.

"A shilling."

"Orright," he said at last. "Whereabouts d'ye want it?"

I opened the bonnet and laid my finger on the carb.

"Here," I said.

Wallop!

Will you believe me when I say that a mouse jumped out of the petrol-tank?  
H. F. E.

### Uncle Joe and Psychology.

THE current interest in psychology, exemplified daily by some new set of (confoundedly) personal questions in the newspapers, has not caused my Uncle Joe to discover anything he didn't know before. He was always interested in psychology: chiefly his own, but, at a pinch, anybody's. His chief reaction nowadays is to jeer like an expert at most of the conclusions drawn by the people who pose the newspaper questions. He says they are too romantic. "They

like to explain motives," he says, "from the standpoint of a fiction-writer. It's demoralizing for the readers, that's what it is." When he says this it is even money that he is thinking about Aunt Susannah and the sausages.

At a time when Aunt Susannah was in bed convalescing from a touch of influenza, the butcher sent some unsatisfactory sausages. It was agreed that these must be emphatically complained about. Aunt Susannah, no doubt for reasons of which Uncle Joe would never admit the validity, was assuming that this complaint (unsuited to the telephone) would have to wait until she was well again; but Uncle Joe said, Nothing of the kind: he was going to complain himself. "A refractory butcher should be roared at," he told Aunt Susannah. "Let me roar."

When he was telling me about this I asked him whether he had roared. He said a little evasively that the story, inextricably connected at every turn with questions of psychology, would emerge all in good time.

On the first post-sausages occasion he had set out for the office, walking, by a slightly different route designed to take him past the butcher's. What had happened? He had fallen in with an acquaintance who began talking about holidays. This man had been on the river, teaching his wife to fish. He told Uncle Joe all about her first bite, which had probably been a five- or six-pound bream; they could not be certain, because the wily fish had resisted her efforts to turn it on its back and had disappeared with the hook. I got the impression that the story of this not very prodigious encounter had been made so enthralling that Uncle Joe, engrossed in fish, had forgotten meat. I suggested tentatively that no doubt he had not so much walked past the butcher's as been wafted past.

No, he said, it was a matter of psychology. He had

exercised his reason, influenced by his nature. He had not been hypnotized by the story; he had merely seen that to interrupt it with the implication that in the scale of practical life sausages were more important would wound the narrator's feelings.

"Did you explain all this to Aunt Susannah?" I asked him.

He said sadly: "There wasn't time. She asked about it just before the News began, so I put it shortly: I said I'd forgotten. And then the next morning . . ."

The next morning he had made different plans. This time, he had decided, he would go on the way back from the office. He would get off the bus outside the butcher's and go in and raise the necessary hell. But what happened this time? Another acquaintance was on the bus, a totally impervious bore, and a man, moreover, who always left the bus just there. Uncle Joe would have gone to any length to avoid getting off at the same point; the last time this had happened he had been talked to for a solid fifteen minutes about the derestiction of certain roads in built-up areas, which this man called "the great adventure"; and he actually did go the length of about three hundred more yards, on the bus. When he explained this to Aunt Susannah she said: "But couldn't you have walked back to the butcher's?"

Uncle Joe pointed out the impossibility of this for a man of his temperament. "Psychologically," he declared, "I am a progressive type. I always had a great disinclination to go back after going forward, and I always shall have, until death me do park."

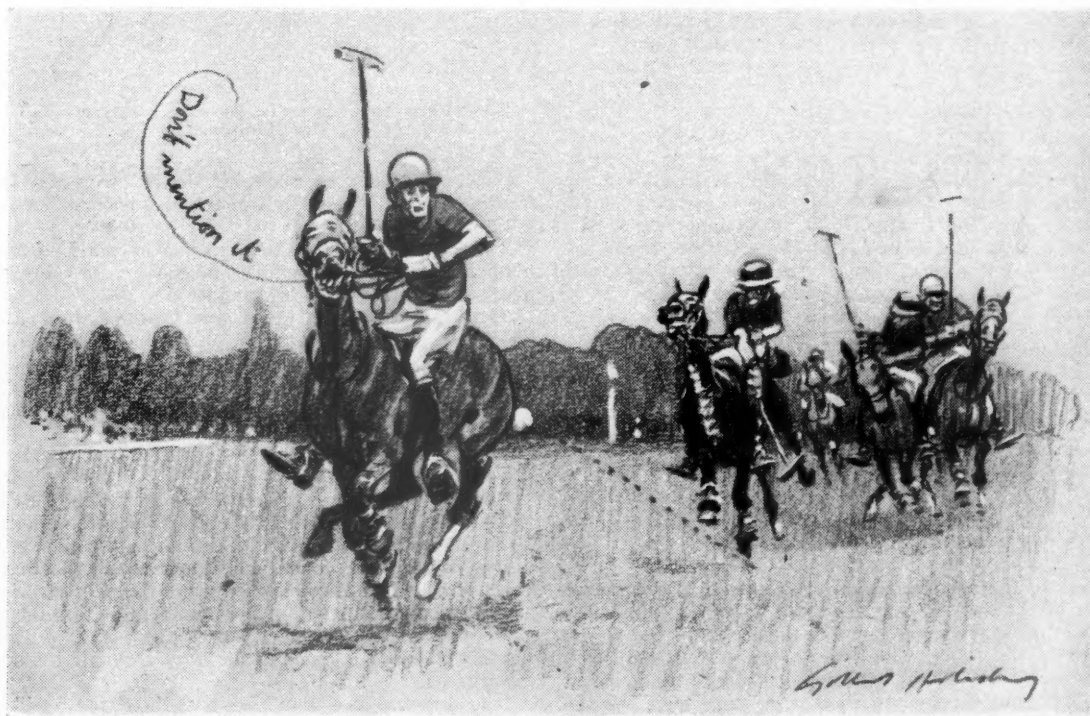
The next day was early-closing day, and Uncle Joe

decided that he would walk back from the office and look in at the butcher's shop before it shut. But just before he reached it he was reminded, by the sight of a boot-repairer's, that there were some shoes of his that must be mended at once; so he hastened in and prevailed on the boot-repairer to send a boy instantly to fetch these shoes. Thereupon it was necessary for Uncle Joe to ring up the house and explain which shoes the boy was coming for; because (he pointed out to me, as to Aunt Susannah) he had a temperamental dislike of wasted effort and could not endure the thought of allowing the repairer to work on shoes that were still wearable. Telephoning at first ousted the butcher from his mind; and when he remembered, the shop was shut.

But Aunt Susannah was beginning to be sceptical of Uncle Joe's grasp of psychology. She had been reading all about psychology herself in the paper that morning, and she explained to Uncle Joe kindly that, although he might not realize it, his real reason for not going to the butcher's and complaining was that he didn't like the idea. That, although he might not realize it, was the real reason. Meanwhile, as it happened, the butcher must have had complaints from other customers, for he had called himself that morning to apologize; so everything was quite all right and Uncle Joe wasn't to worry any more.

"Although I might not realize it!" said Uncle Joe indignantly to me. "Poof! Why, I know myself like a book. These newspaper psychologists and their confounded romanticism. . . . What annoys me most," he added abruptly, "is that I never was very keen, even on good sausages."

R. M.



#### POLO NOTES.

POLO-PONIES MUST HAVE GOOD MANNERS AND BE GOOD-TEMPERED.



## The Bogchester Chronicles.

### The Sherry-Party.

"AHA, Meadows, let no one say that the Bogchester district does not move with the times! Next week the villages are to be supplied with electric-light; an aeroplane was seen over the town yesterday; and this evening Mrs. Gloop is giving the first sherry-party of the neighbourhood. This is indeed the twentieth century.

"Mark you, Meadows, this is intended to be a social gathering for the more enlightened people of the neighbourhood. The tone will undoubtedly be intellectual; art and literature will be discussed. The beer-and-stout party which is to be held, in vulgar imitation, at the 'Black Swan' next week will be a very different sort of affair, and I hope that you for one have no intention of supporting it.

"Is Henry at the door? Ah, I see he is. Drive on to Stagnant Percy, Henry, and see to it that if refreshment is offered to the chauffeurs you accept nothing stronger than lemonade. The disgraceful scene at the races last year may have been forgiven but it has certainly not been forgotten."

### THE TRADITIONS ARE MAINTAINED.

The party is evidently in full swing when I arrive at the Hall. Many cars and the Vicar's tricycle are parked in the drive outside, and an almost deafening clamour comes from the drawing-room within. Indeed, when I am ushered into the room I have some difficulty in forcing my way through the crowd of guests to the far end.

Although this is the first party of its kind held in the district, I recognize at once that the usages of Bogchester Society are being strictly maintained. The less important



"I NOTICE SEVERAL BOWLS OF SAUSAGES."

members of the neighbourhood are confined in a compact mass near the door so that they will be able to slip away quietly without embarrassment to themselves. And at the far end of the room, where those best fitted to discuss literature and art are gathered, I have no doubt that a brand of sherry more suitable to their discerning taste will be supplied.

Seeing that the guests have only just finished tea and will be having dinner in another two hours, the other refreshments are perhaps of less importance; but I notice that

several adequate piles of sandwiches, bowls of sausages and prawns, plates of biscuits and a large cake are waiting at the far end of the room to sustain those who engage in the exhausting work of intellectual conversation.

### A DISAPPOINTING GUEST.

And when I reach my goal I find that I have not been mistaken. The intellectual life of the gathering is obviously centred at this corner of the room. Mrs. Gloop is deep in conversation with a short gentleman in a brown suit whom she introduces to me as Mr. Ernest Jones the artist, who is staying at the "Black Swan" on a sketching holiday.



"I CANNOT HELP FEELING SLIGHTLY DISAPPOINTED IN MR. JONES."

"Tell us about your work, Mr. Jones," says Mrs. Gloop, with that quick sympathy which exists between all people with artistic natures.

"Well," says Mr. Jones, a nervous artist who keeps wiping his hands on his handkerchief and looking furtively at the door, "I'm painting a bridge just now."

"Painting a bridge!" cries Mrs. Gloop enthusiastically. "How we envy you your gift, Mr. Jones! To be able to transmit to canvas the beauties of our countryside must be one of the rarer pleasures of this life."

"Yes," says Mr. Jones, "it is. But I don't do it on canvas; I do it on drawing-paper."

"You will be able to feel that you are giving something of value to the world?"

"Why, yes, of course. I get thirty bob a time for them."

The artistic temperament is not very easy to understand. Nevertheless Mrs. Gloop and I cannot help feeling slightly disappointed in Mr. Jones. It is clear that intellectual conversation is rather above his head, and I am not surprised to see him being conducted further and further down the room.

But what does surprise me is the sight of Captain Featherstonehaugh pushing his way through the throng towards us.

It is of course useless to hope that the Captain will know when he is out of place; but I should at least have expected that those at the other end of the room would have realized that it was their duty to keep him from intruding on us.

"Ah, I thought I'd find you here!" he bawls out at me

offensively. "They tell me the sherry's better up this end, and that's why I'm here too. And besides, they said you were talking about art. Well, let me tell you that I got a prize at school for painting a daffodil."

#### SOME ENLIGHTENED CONVERSATION.

"Indeed," I remark coldly, turning ostentatiously away to rejoin Mrs. Gloop. She is now speaking to a tall pale lady whom I recognize as Ursula Mavis Pilkington, the Clumphampton poetess. With a sweeping gesture the poetess points to Sir George Gorge standing beside the French window and to the dense cloud of smoke rising to the ceiling from his cigar. "It is like a soul escaping from an earth-bound body," she remarks beautifully, and I feel that here, at least, is someone who can add distinction to any literary sherry-party.

Mrs. Gloop moves forward to hand the prawns to Sir George and I break into an eager discussion with the poetess on the subject of life and death—but mostly of death, for, as all who have read the works of Ursula Mavis Pilkington will know, she is deeply interested in graves and graveyards. She points out to me that at a distance Mrs. Gloop's tea-gown is very like a shroud, and that the shadows on the walls are crouching above the guests like gigantic vampire bats.

We are interrupted by the sound of a splintering crash behind us. Turning quickly, I see that Captain Featherstonehaugh, in stretching rudely in front of his neighbours for the chicken-and-ham sandwiches, has overbalanced and upset the plate on to the floor. He picks himself up, retrieves a sandwich and, to my indignation, starts pushing his way towards us again.

"Jolly party this, what?" he says with his mouth full.

The poetess gazes at him with eyes that seem to see



"THE CAPTAIN'S DEPLORABLE DÉBUT IN INTELLECTUAL CONVERSATION."

straight through into his soul. "Is any party ever . . . jolly?" she asks.

"Eh?" says the Captain.

"Only one party can ever bring balm to the tired heart," continues the poetess. "Only that last gathering of all, when the honoured guest is lowered to the root of the yew tree."

"Miss Pilkington is speaking of funerals," I explain coldly to the Captain, who is quite unable to follow the workings of this fine mind. At my words he brightens.

"Oh, funerals," he says. "Well, if you like funerals, Miss

Pilkington, you had better come to some of the ones they have round here. You can get as good a drop of sherry as this, and more to eat with it too."

"And yet each poor soul must go for ever hungry," sighs the poetess sadly.

"What poor soul?" asks the Captain in bewilderment. "There's no need for anyone to go hungry. They'll give you a great slab of cake if you ask for it."

#### A POLICE BLUNDER.

But the Captain's deplorable début in intellectual conversation is cut short in a most unexpected manner. Suddenly the doors at the far end of the room are flung open and Police-Constable John Budge appears on the threshold. "Keep your places, ladies and gents," he roars out. "I got to take all names and addresses afore any person or persons is allowed to leave the building." And with these words he produces his notebook and starts writing in an officious and self-important manner.

It is obvious that some absurd misunderstanding must have occurred, but we are at a complete loss to account for it, and I force my way to the door determined to get to the root of the matter.

"Police-Constable Budge," I demand, "what is the meaning of this unwarranted intrusion?"

"It means that I have just carried out a single-handed raid on this building, that's what it means," says Police-Constable Budge with satisfaction.

"On what grounds?"

"Well, it's a night-club, ain't it?" he asks in surprise.

"It is most certainly not a night-club. Mrs. Gloop is holding a literary and artistic sherry-party for a number of private guests."

"Same thing," replies the police-constable. "Or if it's not that it's a bottle-party. Whatever it is, it's against the law. You've only got to read the Sunday papers to know that."

It seems that I might have to spend half the night arguing with this obstinate officer; but at this moment I am joined by Major Smythe the Chief Constable, who is fortunately one of the party. At the sight of him Police-Constable Budge's jaw drops and he tries uneasily to explain that he is taking subscriptions for police charities; but a few curt words from Major Smythe soon send him about his business.

#### UNJUST RUMOURS.

However, the artistic atmosphere of the gathering has now been completely shattered. A ridiculous rumour goes round that the police-constable has only left for reinforcements and there is a hurried move to break up the party before he returns.

Seeing that it is impossible to explain matters, I too take my departure; but a further surprise awaits me in the lane outside. In the belief that the Hall is being raided a dense crowd of villagers has assembled outside the gates, and extraordinary stories of orgies and cabarets are being circulated.

I consider it best to ignore this demonstration, and I am not impressed by overhearing Captain Featherstonehaugh's attempt to deal with it. "Orgies?" he bawls out to a low acquaintance in the crowd. "There haven't been any orgies at the Hall, I can tell you. Why, Miss Pilkington the poetess has been telling me all the evening that she couldn't even get enough to eat."

It is clear to me that, when scenes such as this are possible, the intellectual life of Bogchester has little chance of making any progress.

H. W. M.

## "Anon."

LET us try to clear the mind concerning anonymity.

Up to a point, it is clear enough, anonymity is a virtue. As we skip through an anthology our eye is caught by the signature "Anon." and we halt. We may even read the poem above, simply because it is by "Anon." We like to think of the shy and humble poet, the modest violet, who was content to give his soul to the world without the vulgar rewards of fame. How different from the self-centred HORACE, who boasted that in his poetry he had set up an everlasting monument to himself!

The Anonymous Donor, too, is an object of admiration, the man who gives thousands for a hospital, an old building or a manuscript, but—except, we suppose, on the cheque—does not reveal his name. Even the Nameless Rescuer, he who pulls a child out of the canal, and walks off quietly to change his trousers, instead of waiting till the reporters arrive—he is a splendid fellow.

And, as we mount higher, we find more examples of noble anonymity. How few in every thousand of the population could tell you the name of the editor of *The Times*, or indeed of any other great paper! Even among the less austere papers it is difficult by close inquiry to discover the name of the editor—partly because, as a rule, there seem to be three or four, not counting the proprietor: and not even the staff can certainly name the boss. Yet these are the men who (we presume) make governments and mar them, give birth to policies and movements and sway the thoughts of multitudes. And the thunderous leader-writer is more secret still. For twenty years or more he may be a leader, the daily guide, inspiration, disturber or comfort of millions. But one day he finds another at his desk and quietly goes home: and not one of his millions is even aware that he has gone. It is really rather pathetic. Yet every freelance skirmisher and sports writer and dramatic critic and gossip-monger may imprint his name upon the minds of the people—and must, let us add, pay the penalty.

Which brings us to a different field of thought. Is anonymity truly, and always, a virtue? The mask is not invariably the sign of modesty; and in these days even our eggs have to be stamped with the place of origin. Even our friend the Anonymous Donor is open to attack from low-minded persons: for if, by chance, he should

afterwards receive a peerage, he has avoided the suggestion that he has purchased honour by the easy expenditure of money. Even the Nameless Rescuer may hamper the police and defeat justice by slipping away without leaving his card on the canal-bank: for the child may have been thrown in.

And then, those leader-writers. Is it really right and noble that men who make or mar governments, give birth to policies, sway the thoughts of multitudes, etc., should do these important things anonymously? In Australia, we believe, during election time, all political articles, leading or not, have to be signed. There is much to be said for this—not only at election-time. The statesman stands in the open for all to shoot at. Is it right, some will say, that his enemies should be able to shoot at him from behind a brick wall?

The "Press-Lord," so much deprecated in refined circles, does at least put his own name to the opinions which he publishes, and those who disagree know where they are. But who is "Our Parliamentary Representative"? Who is "Our Political Correspondent"? Nobody knows. Sometimes he is a Member of Parliament; sometimes he is one of the gentlemen who look down from the Press Gallery and see, like gods, that it is easy; sometimes he is neither. If he is a Member, his fellow-Members ought to know, that they may answer him, if need be, in the proper place: and, if he is not, the world should know, that they may be able to set a true value on his views. "Our Parliamentary Representative" may, for all we know, be a Minister. Or he may be a failed B.A., a defeated candidate, a Prohibitionist, a "vested interest," a "propagandist," a burglar. The name of a writer may, in a particular context, be evidence of malice or incompetence; and the modest mask of anonymity may easily conceal both.

Anonymity, then, is beginning to lose a few of its pretty tail-feathers. And now let us pass—a long leap, it is true—to the anonymous letter. Here at least, we all agree. But do we? The mind flies at once to the "Poison Pen," the favourite recreation, it appears, of women who don't play cricket in villages which have no cinema. But stop a minute: one can think of righteous anonymous letters—anonymous warnings, for example, to innocent citizens from guilty citizens who are wanted by the police. There are truly noble anonymous letters to public men and institutions and authors from persons who wish to give

praise without causing the trouble of a reply. These are rare.

Then, halfway to the "Poison Pen," is the anonymous correspondent who behaves like a cad with a good conscience. He is deeply moved, he must defend the right; he will strike a blow for justice; but he will take good care that nobody can hit him back. So he flings a stone over the wall. Yet observe that even this poor wretch may conceive that he is being righteous.

None of us will say so much for the vile and veritable poison-pen-driver, who lurks alone in her den and spits venom into the letter-box; who has not even the excuse of sudden anger provoking a single offence, but makes a habit and a campaign of anonymous abuse. She—or he? but has there been a he?—behaves horribly because she likes it. She, like all anonymous writers, enjoys the sense of impregnable power. She—but let us leave the painful theme.

For now at last we are clear. But are we?

In the end this she, he, or it is caught and prosecuted; and judge or magistrate contemptuously fulminates against the wickedness of the anonymous and malicious letter-writer. Judges, politicians and most sensible men tear such compositions up and forget them. But—and this is the odd thing—we have a Government Department which carefully studies them and files them away, which investigates the facts alleged in them and frequently acts upon them; which, so men say, would seldom act at all if it were not for anonymous letters. This is the office of the King's Proctor. And if the poison-pen-driver confines her activities to sending the same sort of information to that office she will find herself, not in the dock, but an instrument of justice. From time to time, if her information is true, she may even see in the Law Lists "*v. — and — (The King's Proctor intervening)*" and know that she has backed a winner. All this is odd, is it not?

But, at least, we hope that the mind is now clear concerning anonymity.

A. P. H.

### An Impending Apology.

"Discussing the need for populating the Commonwealth, Mr. Lyons said that Australia depended upon the British Navy to maintain standards."—*Australian Paper*.

"CROOKED BRIDGE  
IS WORRYING  
WIMBLEDON."

News Heading.

Then why play it?





RUSH-HOUR ON THE MOSCOW TUBE.



J.H. DOWD '36.

"OW MUCH IS THE SEA AN HOUR?"

### The Big Drummer.

My little friend Podgy McSump and I were resting on a favourite seat of ours overlooking the sea, and the talk had been desultory until Podgy suddenly announced, "When I'm a big man wi' lang troosers I'm goin' to be a big drummer in a band."

"When did this happen?" I asked.

"It was yesterday. An' ye have to shoot a tiger before ye can be a big drummer."

"I never knew that."

"But ye have," said Podgy, nodding his head at me solemnly. "Because Willie Pilkie's Uncle Tam's a big drummer. But first he had to shoot a tiger."

"Did Willie Pilkie's uncle tell you that?"

"Ay. An' Willie Pilkie's Uncle Tam cut the skin aff the tiger an' buttoned it on in front o' him for hangin' the big drum on. An' then the Colonel made a' the sojers stand at attention. An' the Colonel said"—Podgy took a deep breath—"This here Tam Pilkie's to be the big drummer because he

shot the tiger.' An' that's the way that I'm goin' to be a big drummer."

"Well, well. But you'll have to learn music if you want to go into the band."

"I will not," said Podgy. "Ye don't need to blow anything when ye're a big drummer. Ye just keep bashin' the big drum for a' ye're worth an' lead the sojers."

"But wouldn't you rather be a fighting soldier with a gun?"

"But ye can't carry a gun when ye're a big drummer, because it takes ye a' yer time to hold up yer big drum."

"I'm afraid if you went into the battle without a gun the enemy would shoot you."

"They would not. Because," illustrating the idea by sticking out his stomach, "I would push them awa' wi' ma big drum."

"I don't see how that would work, because—"

"Ye're just tryin' to stop me from bein' a big drummer," complained Podgy. "An' besides, I want ye to tell me a story about a big drummer."

"Oh! Well, it's a funny thing, when I was a little boy like you my

mother used to tell me a story about a big drummer."

"Hoo big was he? Was he as big as Goliath?"

"He was a man of gigantic size called Alistair McSonachan, and he had a sweetheart."

"Is there one o' these dashed wummans comin' into it?" sourly.

Podgy, I should explain, is cursed with a type of beauty which the ladies cannot resist. Consequently, except among his intimates and in fairy circles, he is an avowed misogynist, casting a disapproving eye on all "these dashed wummans that's ay tryin' to kiss ye," with, for some reason, an especially baleful look for "fat wummans."

"The woman is only coming into the story for a moment," I assured him. "One night," I went on, "just as Alistair McSonachan was setting off to lead his band down to a certain village, he was told that his sweetheart had left him and become the sweetheart of another man."

"That's good," said Podgy.

"But Alistair McSonachan didn't think so; he was very much upset."

"An' did he bash her wi' his drumsticks?" hopefully.

"A nice big drummer wouldn't do that."

"Would he no'?" bending his brows significantly.

"No. What happened was that Alister McSonachan got furiously angry and he vented his rage on the big drum. He beat it so hard that he couldn't hear the music, and he walked so fast that the band couldn't keep up with him."

"Maybe he was tryin' to catch the wumman."

"It was a terribly foggy night, and at a certain point, instead of taking the road that led to the village, by mistake the big drummer took the road that went up into the glen. The band, having lost sight of him in the fog, took the right road and marched on without him. And so the big drummer was lost."

"But did they no' send the policeman to catch him an' bring him back?"

"No, he went on alone up into the dark foggy glen, beating his drum furiously all the time. But gradually the sound died away. And from that

day to this, so the story goes, nothing was ever seen again of Alister McSonachan."

"Was it the fairies that got him?" queried Podgy in an awestruck voice.

"The people said that he had disappeared into a hole in the hillside. And when I was a little boy like you, Podgy, and the thunder came, my mother used to tell me it was the echo of Alister McSonachan beating his drum away down under the ground."

"He would be tryin' to get oot," murmured Podgy, shaking his head dismally. "Poor wee Alister McSonachan!" An angry flush came into his face. "An' it was one o' these dashed wummans that made him do it. An' I'll bet ye," disgustedly—"I'll bet ye she was just a great big fat lump."

D.

GENEVA, Thursday.

The tight Italian journalists arrested for their participation in the scene at the League Assembly on Tuesday . . .

Birmingham Paper.

No such excuse has so far been put forward for Herr Greiser.

## Love and Letters.

when jennie  
was a friend  
of percy's  
she used  
to write erotic  
verses  
she then  
enjoyed  
a great success  
as a leading  
vers libre  
poetess

But when she fell  
In love with Peter,  
It brought her back  
To rhyme and metre.

At last she married Mr. Rose; so now  
she writes the dullest prose. M. H.

"Mr. Montague: Why is it that the police  
protected the Fascist military band?"

Sir John Simon: I refute the allegation  
that the police protected anybody."

Parliamentary Report.

As if that's what they were there for!



"PLEASE, MISS HARDCASTLE, DADDY SAID I WAS TO DO HOT TAP DANCING THIS TERM."



## The Grand Cational.

(A Prophetic Dream.)

["Britain's newest sport—cat-racing—will start in August at Portesham, Dorset. The track will be 440 yards long, will have four traps, and of course an electric mouse. Fifty village cats are in training."—*Daily Express*.]

CAT-RACING opened yesterday at Portesham. All the mice in the district were reported to be playing. There was a good attendance, and amongst those inspecting the cats in the Run I noticed the Marquis of Carabas, Lady Pussyfote and her daughter Lady Kitty, Princess Tabitha of Siam, Prince Selim of Persia, the Governor of the Isle of Man, the MacMilks of that ilk, and the Crown Prince of Mongrelia. There were fifty entries for the six races; some scratched.

The first race was a Selling Saucerer, the Cream Saucer for three-month-olds. I said in my notes yesterday that it would take a good cat to beat Nancy. This proved to be correct; there was only one cat in it. This good cat is reputed to be by Nanking, out of Fancy. She was bought in for three shillings and twopence.

There followed the Herringshead Stakes: a hundred coppers with a tin of Milko added. There was a strong entry for this race, and it was deemed to be a very open race, and a very open race it proved to be. Fluffy was said to be strongly supported by her Mews, and her trainer (if I may for once, with his permission, break my usual rule of not indulging in personalities in these columns) frankly said to me in the Run, "Whatever beats Fluffy will win." My own choice was Mrs. Sweeting's Yum-Yum. She ran well at the start, but faded out at the distance: I think that the going was rather hard for a young cat known to be exceptionally long in the paw-nails. The result may be taken by some to confirm the superstition that tortoise-shells never win at Portesham.

Of the race itself there was never any doubt. Mr. Mom's Siamese, Chulayugala, led from the start and cantered home an easy winner. This good cat, reputed to be by Chulalongkorn, out of Chulalongkorna, had not won a race before and started at the handsome odds of a hundred-to-one against.

Then came the race of the day: the Grand Cational Steaks, two hundred coppers with two fillet steaks added. There was a large entry for this classic race. During the parade in the Run I especially noticed the blue Persian, Salah-ed-Din, and his mews-companion, Nasr-ul-Mulk, a cat of quite another colour, namely orange. Mr. Purr-Purr's much-fancied Criss-Cross, reputed to be by Yowler, out of Fly-by-Night, was sweating so freely that I felt convinced it hadn't a cat's chance. So it proved to be.

The mouse well away, when the traps were opened it became at once obvious that Kitecat was going to make a bold bid to win. Challenged by Teeny round the first corner (with Queeny and Weeny well up) she showed him a clean pair of paws, and he fell back beaten. At the next turn she was still in front and on the heels of the mouse, with Queeny and Weeny still well up. Coming down the straight there suddenly emerged out of the ruck a cat wearing the little-known ribbon of the Deemster. Right up to the finish there was nothing in it, but the favourite had made her effort too soon, and (though I myself might perhaps have given it a dead-heat) the judge, no doubt correctly, gave the race to The Manxman by a short whisker. This good cat is reputed to be by Manchester, out of Douglas, and obviously bred for a stayer. At the same time I confess that I had not thought I should live to see this classic race won by a cat, however soundly bred, with no tail, all-white paws, and only three legs. I under-

stand that this will be The Manxman's last race and that this good cat will go to stud.

Of the rest of the racing there is little to say. The Valerian Handicap went, as expected, to that very promising young Tom, Tom-Tom; and Ginger, the favourite, left the rest of the field nowhere in the Milk Stakes, winning, in fact, by a whole lap. An unfortunate incident, however, marred the last race, the Cheshire Stakes. The seven starters were well away, running whisker and whisker, when a terrier brought by the Crown Prince of Mongrelia slipped its lead (as it had done at Epsom in June) dashed on to the track and attacked the leading cat, Sir Midnight Tile's Siren. Captain Ninetails, the Controller (than whom there is no more efficient official in the cat-racing world to-day), at once arrested the progress of the mouse, but the mischief was already irreparable. It was difficult to make out what was happening from the Press Box; all that could be seen was a whirl of cats and coloured ribbons surrounding the terrier, conspicuous by his whiteness, who more than held his own. Attendants rushed rapidly to the spot and overcame the furious animals. Everyone's sympathy will go out to Mrs. Canary, whose good cat Puss-Wuss was so badly mauled that it had to be chloroformed. The judges declared "No Race." I understand that the stewards are to hold an inquiry.

So ended an enjoyable afternoon's racing. As I left the stand I met a man who should know who warned me of a menace to cat-racing which he declares to be imminent. The rumour is that a certain syndicate is proposing to start mouse-racing tracks all over England, and that a patent for an Electric Cheese has already been taken out. I cannot pretend that I am not disturbed at this threat to our old English sport of cat-racing, which is part and parcel of our industry of cat-breeding. Nor can I avoid the feeling that the public which "Goes to the Mice" will be interested entirely in the gambling side of the sport. But the march, so-called, of progress must, I suppose, go on.

J. C. S.

## The Sweets of Science.

[Suggested by the letters in *Nature*, July 4th, on the "dark red background of the galaxies" compared with "the rose-red city half as old as Time," and the three "glycosides of madder."]

THOUGH the bells in Shandon steeple  
May delight old-fashioned people,

Heard above the pleasant waters of the Lee,  
Hooting sirens, creaking derricks,  
Even wireless atmospherics

Are a source of deeper ecstasy to me.

Scent of true Sabæan savour

Still enjoys a partial favour,

And the nostrils of the Sybarite arrides;

But give me the aroma

And the suffocating coma

Disseminated by the aldehydes.

Modern painters in their fervour

Seek to startle the observer

By reliance on their peacock-hued appeals,

But I find more consolation

In the dusky rubrication

Which the background of the galaxies reveals.

And though rare sweets and ices,

Compounded at high prices,

A transitory rapture may impart,

The glycosides of madder

Make me infinitely gladder

And rejoice the inmost cockles of my heart. C. L. G.

## Grass.

Now that the asparagus season is over, at any rate for those of us who cannot go to Scotland, a few reflections on this distinguished vegetable may perhaps be permissible. To have uttered them while the dish could still be enjoyed might have been tactless.

First, however, let me explain that I am writing about what Covent Garden, disdaining syllables, calls "grass." A foolish word for a greengrocer to use, because there is nothing much less like the herbage of the fields than these lightly-bound faggots—but it is the survival, I am told, of "sparrow grass," the trade's word for the plant. "Sparrow" has gone, and "grass" remains: the opposite of rhyming slang, where the beginning gradually replaces the end, so that the "pain" that once was a "Drury Lane" is now a "Drury" only, the "railway guard" that once was a "Christmas card" is now a "Christmas" pure and simple.

To begin with, I should like to know if something could be done before next year to protect us from those ecstatic week-enders who have been staying in the country, at houses "where, my dear, you could eat the whole stick"? "You never saw such asparagus," they assure us: "green and soft right to the very end. You put them in your mouth, with a little Hollandaise or a little Mousseline or a little hot butter, and they melt—absolutely melt. The whole stick! In fact, my dear, why use the word 'stick' at all? They are not sticks; they are divine lengths of succulent greenness." And so on.

So many persons condemned to consume (if they have been lucky enough to get any asparagus at all) the asparagus lashed together in bundles and peddled by greengrocers, or the asparagus served at restaurants, in both of which varieties the white handle has always been prominent, have been condemned to listen to such raptures that I think the matter is worth serious inquiry. Why should there be this discrepancy? Why should private houses in the country provide a plenitude of asparagus that, my dear, you can eat to the very end, while we in the towns, at ridiculous expense, must put up with handles that not only are white but are long and tough? Why are even the best restaurants satisfied to serve, at far too much apiece, sticks of asparagus of which we have to leave half at least on our plates? Why does not a single restaurant advertise that its asparagus is as tender and wholly assimilable



"I WONDER IF THIS COULD BE CONVERTED INTO A YACHTING-CAP?"

as that of a country house, and undertake to return the money if it is found not to be? Why do not greengrocers refuse to stock the old woody fashions? Because, I suppose, the people who patronise them are gulls.

But the fact remains—as too many of us have heard and a fortunate few of us have been privileged to test—that asparagus need not be old and fibrous and half resistant, or, in other words, that it was young once. Why then cannot the superb vegetable, in this form, reach the cities? Why do those who cut it wait too long before they get to work?

The present asparagus season being over, and the growers and the green-grocers and the hotel-buyers having time to think on the subject, my sug-

gestion is that an effort should be made, so that next spring the asparagus which comes to London should be green and soft all the way down, and that, either with a little Hollandaise or a little Mousseline or a little hot butter, you can eat it, my dear, right to the very end: just pop it in your mouth, as I did when I was spending the weekend with the Ducketts, and, my dear, let it melt.

Meanwhile, those of us who like asparagus must compose ourselves to wait until next year, perhaps making the delay a little easier by an occasional dish of sea-kale, white from the darkness in which it is grown, which, with a little Hollandaise or a little Mousse-line or a little plain hot butter, can be, my dear, delicious too. E. V. L.



"BUT, MY DEAR GOOD MAN, I STOPPED DEAD, AND YOU BACKED INTO ME."

### Lines Written in a Soda-Fountain.

"SHALL we have a Frappé or a Parfait or a Sundae?"  
 Can I give an answer? No.  
 I suppose the things exist, for I see them on the list;  
 But further I am loath to go.  
 Had it been a question between Sherry or Madeira,  
 Had it been alternatives of Burgundy or Claret,  
 Then had my direction been of service in selection  
 And I flatter me my counsel would have suffered no  
 rejection;  
 But "Shall we have a Frappé or a Parfait or a Sundae?"  
 Honest, I just don't know.

There are Frappés, there are Parfaits, there are Sundaes  
 All waiting for the idle rich,  
 But if I had a month of Mondays  
 I couldn't tell you which is which.  
 There are Sundaes, there are Frappés, there are Parfaits  
 By the bucket and the bushel and the cart  
 In the Fountains and the Tea-rooms and the Cahr-fès,  
 But who can tell the things apart?  
 There are Parfaits, there are Sundaes, there are Frappés,  
 But discrimination mid these three  
 Is a job for more sophisticated chappies—  
 Ay, for experts. Don't ask me.

"Shall we have a Frappé or a Parfait or a Sundae?"  
 Haply we'd enjoy a treat—  
 But how to go to work? With a spoon or with a fork?  
 And are they meant to drink or eat?  
 Had the case been ordinary nourishment or tippie,  
 Had the issue lain among the normal consummations,  
 I had been delighted to have learnedly recited  
 Experience, authority till settlement was sighted;  
 But—"Shall we have a Frappé or a Parfait or a  
 Sundae?"  
 Please yourselves. I'm beat.

H. B.

### ENTERPRISE







SINBAD THE SAILOR.

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## Impressions of Parliament.

### Synopsis of the Week.

**Monday, July 6th.**—Commons: Debates on Livestock and the B.B.C.

**Tuesday, July 7th.**—Lords: Debate on Tithe Bill.

Commons: Report Stage of Midwives Bill concluded.



PAINTING THE ROADS RED.

MR. HORE-BELISHA.

**Wednesday, July 8th.**—Lords: Tithe Bill read a Second Time.

Commons: Debate on Malnutrition.

**Monday, July 6th.**—Two Ministers made important announcements today.

MR. HORE-BELISHA told the Commons that the Government had decided to bring in a Bill in the autumn which would transfer from the County Councils to the Ministry of Transport full responsibility for the maintenance and improvement of 4,500 miles of trunk roads and come into effect next spring. Roads in the metropolitan and county boroughs of England and Wales would not be included in the scheme, nor would those of the large burghs of Scotland; and the necessary financial arrangements would be discussed with the local authorities.

The second announcement had to do with the British fat cow and her family, whose representative was conspicuously absent from the Distinguished Strangers' Gallery. They are to be handsomely treated, for Mr. ELLIOT announced that the Government intended to apply up to £5,000,000 annually by way of subsidy, which would be produced by import duties on beef and veal from foreign countries on a permanent basis.

Empire beef would come in free, and so would mutton and lamb from any source. In addition an Empire Meat Council and an International Meat Conference would be set up. Parliament will be asked to approve three Bills covering the scheme.

The Post Office Vote gave an opportunity to discuss the future of the B.B.C.; and the P.M.G. opened the debate with a survey of the Government's attitude to the Ullswater Report. The only serious divergences, he explained, were over the suggestion that a senior Minister should be responsible for the cultural side of broadcasting, which the Government rejected on the ground that this would end independent management by the Corporation; and over the relay exchanges, which the Government proposed to leave as they were (with no guarantee after 1939), in spite of the Committee's recommendation that they should be taken over by the Post Office.

After Mr. LEES-SMITH had complained that the B.B.C. lacked a proper respect for the House, Mr. LANSBURY had paid tribute to Sir JOHN REITH, who, he said, would have made a model English HITLER, and Mr. MARKLEW had protested against the B.B.C.'s ban on Spiritualist broadcasts, the debate was adjourned.

**Tuesday, July 7th.**—In moving the Second Reading of the Tithe Bill in the Upper House, LORD HALIFAX said it must not be forgotten that the State

had undertaken an onerous financial obligation, and therefore that adequate powers of recovery were in fairness due to it.

He was followed by LORD MARLEY, whose opposition to the Bill seemed based on a rooted objection to the Church of England, which he some-



NURSING THE BABY.

SIR KINGSLEY WOOD.

what sweepingly described as a Church which had always been resented by the English and which had been in a state of progressive deterioration "over the last centuries." In his view there was neither service received nor service desired by those who paid tithe.

After Liberal support for the Bill had been pledged by LORD CREWE, the PRIMATE dealt gently but effectively with LORD MARLEY and went on to assure their Lordships that the Church had never been consulted about the policy of the Government. But, although the Bill relieved the tithe-payer more than the owner, he felt bound to back it as a sound compromise.

The Bishop of NORWICH differed, believing that the Bill was unnecessary and that Queen Anne's Bounty would have been able to hold the position secure, but the Bishop of ST. EDMUNDSBURY found the Bill acceptable, in spite of the losses which it inflicted on the Church. The debate was then adjourned.

At Question-time Miss WILKINSON and Sir JOHN JARVIS drew from Mr. RUNCIMAN a statement that the Government would welcome the establishment of a steel works at Jarrow, and a promise to receive a deputation on the subject. This will presumably

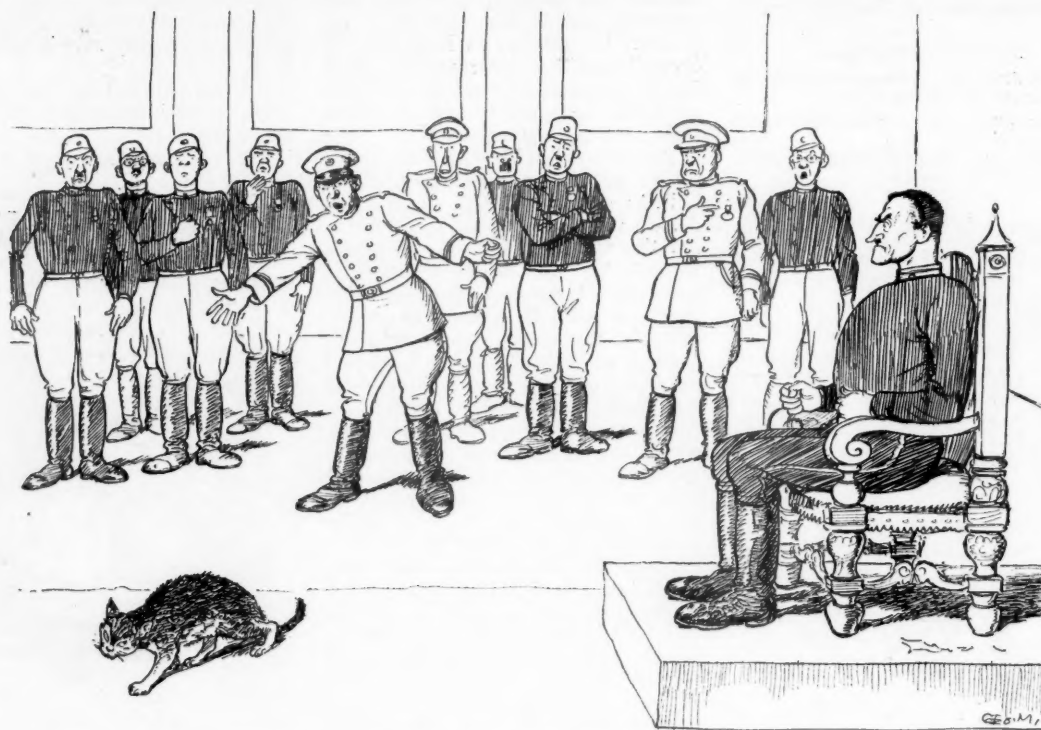


BAYING THE MOON.

["To bay the moon: to rail uselessly, especially at those in high places, as a dog thinks to frighten the moon by baying at it."—Dictionary.]

MR. GREENWOOD.





THE CAT THAT TRIED TO LOOK AT A DICTATOR.

have some hard things to say on the limited outlook of the Iron and Steel Federation, which has refused on what seem slender grounds to give Jarrow its chance.

It is to be hoped that Mr. LOGAN is a pessimist. He foresaw serious riots in Ulster on the Twelfth, and this afternoon he asked Mr. DUFF COOPER to send over some more troops. The reply was that if the Labour Party would do their bit to encourage recruiting such precautions would become more possible.

The Report Stage of the Midwives Bill showed Sir KINGSLEY WOOD in the rôle of the nation's Chief Midhusband, which he played with tact and geniality.

Wednesday, July 8th.—The point of view of the reasonable tithe-payer was put to the House of Lords this afternoon when Lord HASTINGS, dissociating himself and other landowners entirely from Lord MARLEY's attitude towards the Church, said that considering the tremendous sacrifices the Government were demanding, the financial advantage to the tithe-payer should be greater.

Lord MARLEY found an echo in Lord FARINGDON, but more detailed criticism came from Lord CRANWORTH, who

thought the Bill would fail to remove the Church from the sordid arena of controversy, that the first bankruptcy



OUR BACK-BENCH WHO'S WHO.

One can safely say  
Of Mr. DAY  
That Order-Paper congestions  
Are due to his endless Questions.

forced by the State would react badly on the Government and do incalculable harm to the Church, and that in its present form the Bill was wholly unacceptable. He hoped, however, that the Government would allow every latitude for its improvement.

Serious damage to higher education would result from the Bill, said Lord DONOUGHMORE, for Oxford alone would suffer to the tune of £10,000 a year; but in reply Lord DE LA WARR reminded the critics that relief did not fall from heaven like manna, and that any softening of the tithe-payer's lot would have to be at the expense of the tax-payer.

In the Commons, the debate on Malnutrition showed Opposition anxiety to increase the national consumption of milk, particularly amongst children, to improve the distribution of surpluses, and to make it impossible for anyone to be living below the minimum standard laid down by the B.M.A. For the Government, Sir KINGSLEY WOOD quickly made the point that the greatest obstacle was not under-nourishment but improper nourishment. He went on to promise that any practicable suggestion for extending the cheap-milk scheme would receive Government support.

### Pince-Nez.

Edith has lately taken to wearing glasses—rimless pince-nez that give her a prim and schoolmistress-of-the-old-school air. Personally I think there is very little wrong with her eyes, but a month or so ago she read an article in a magazine about eye-strain. She went to our local optician, who told her that her eyes were perfectly sound, but she said she didn't quite trust him because he had a red moustache, and people with red moustaches never really knew their jobs. So she had her eyes tested at two other places, and the third man, seeing that she was determined to have faulty eyesight, sold her the pince-nez.

Although I am firmly convinced that the glass in them is perfectly plain, Edith maintains that her eyes have been much better since she used them.

"Where are my glasses?" she says when the postman comes, and before she can read her letters we have to hunt high and low for the wretched things. I am a confirmed pipe-loser myself, but just occasionally I find my

pipe where I expect to find it. Edith's glasses are always rushing away and secreting themselves in the most unexpected places—in the meat-safe, folded inside *The Times*, removed (in their case) by the dog to his kennel, nestling coyly among the works of the piano, or pretending to be a hardy perennial in the garden.

She had been haunted by the pince-nez for about a week when she was summoned to the bedside of a sick aunt in Shropshire. I drove her to the station and found her a corner-seat facing the engine, bought her a large pile of magazines, and generally acted the part of the perfect husband.

"And I *do* hope you've got your glasses," I said.

"I'm sure I have," she answered. "I remember putting them in the small blue suit-case, and I'll unpack them as soon as the train starts. I'm absolutely certain that they are there all right; there isn't the faintest possible chance that I failed to put them in, but if you find them on the table when you get home please post them off express straight away."

The train puffed out, and I went home.

And the first thing I saw of course was Edith's glasses. Knowing that she was away, they had forsaken their usual eccentric hiding-places and lay, in their black case, in the middle of the library table. I seized them and wrapped them in paper, and then in more paper. Then I put the shapeless bundle in a large cigarette-tin and wrapped the tin in still more paper. So thoroughly protected, I reckoned, not even the most mischievous glasses could get broken in transit. It was a hot day, and I did not relish the journey to the post-office, so I was glad to find Miss Wagg lurking in the garden.

"I came round to see Edith," she said, "but I searched all over the house and then presumed you were both out, and decided to wait in the garden."

I told her that Edith was away, and would she mind posting a parcel to her on her way through the village?

An hour later the telephone-bell rang.

"This is Miss Wagg here. I posted that parcel for you, and now you can do *me* a good turn. I left my pince-nez in their case on your library table. Would you mind bringing them along next time you're passing?"



"JANE, WHY WILL YOU ALWAYS PUT BACK VIRGIL AMONG THE GREEKS?"

## At the Play.

### "A BRIDE FOR THE UNICORN" (WESTMINSTER).

MR. DENIS JOHNSTON describes his play, *A Bride for the Unicorn*, at the Westminster Theatre, as "an imaginary adventure." But it owes most of its success, and a capital success it is, to the excellent discipline to which the Irish imagination is subjected. If the large framework of this story of the adventures of the soul is arbitrary enough, the actual figures which provide the action are as real as can be, and their actuality includes a great deal of humour. The entertainment is richly funny.

*John*, the central figure (Mr. GODFREY KENTON) has to be ordinary, for he is the ordinary man. But though he has his secrets and his secret quest, his life is lived sociably. His fellow human beings stand by him, after their fashion and up to a point, even though they have no comprehension of the vision that is haunting him. And these companions are the most splendid company of colourful personalities that a full-blooded dramatist could have had the high spirits to create. *Leonard* the Learned, *Bernard* the Brave, *Percy* the Prosperous, *Egbert* the Eccentric, *Lewis* the Loving, *Albert* the Acquisitive, and *Harold* the Helpful cover between them the main activities of mankind, and we follow them from school through the vicissitudes of their not very edifying lives till some have achieved shameful success and some shameful failure.

They are old Paddlewickians, and the Old Boy note, the recurring *motif* of the old school song, contributes an endearing element reminiscent of Narkover College, into which they would all have fitted very happily. Their gay vigour, which finds its playground in a succession of crudely bright scenes, shows modern men taking their pleasures, fighting for money, carrying on their largely hypocritical institutions.

They are much more than a sub-plot, for they are irrepressible and cannot be dominated, and the dramatist deserves every credit for this. It would have been easy for him to devise an entertainment that fell into two halves, the main portion

very tense and high-flown, dealing with the adventures of the soul, and the second part cheerful but really irrelevant buffoonery. What he has achieved is

of both. Here is the interior life, not isolated but struggling amid incessant distractions of a low but imperative kind.

The bride who comes to *John* on the threshold of manhood and vanishes almost at once, the ideal that he can never forget, that destroys his pleasure in what contents his companions, is found at last and proves to be the destruction and end of merely human life. He has never forgotten the first rapture because it was something different in kind from the ordinary joys and sorrows available for mortal men, but the very quality which made it unforgettable made it also impossible. No man could look on that face and live.

The guiding purpose of *John's* life remains a search, but that does not prevent him from living out, though not fully or with all his being, an ordinary human life. There is a remarkable scene showing the nature of the marriage he has contracted, where he and his wife (Miss SHELAH RICHARDS) describe quite dispassionately, and as though they were talking about their neighbours, their real relations to each other and the daily subterfuges and quiet unbiting hostilities.

At the end Mr. JOHNSTON brings forward the wife, who has played through the years this very minor rôle in *John's* spiritual life, and increases her stature as a widow to something greater than it had ever been as a wife, because even so partial a union had had its high moments and its meaning. Tremendous affirmations of the worth of human action lead the play to a stirring finale, derived in fact from the Christian doctrine of the significance of the human soul. On the premises from which the play is set out there should be no such note at the end, but it is a better evening for ending as it does. D. W.

### "THE LADY OF LA PAZ" (CRITERION).

All I know for certain about Costa Rica is that it is one of those places whose inhabitants sound like cigars. But if this play is in the least accurate, then Costa Rican society has progressed very little from the cruder notions of the Middle Ages, and life is only made tolerable for it by coffee-dividends large enough to ensure an



OFF HIS PEDESTAL AND ON  
THE BUST.

A Drunk Bust . . . MR. MICHAEL COLE.

much more remarkable—a blending of the two which increases the meaning



The Bridegroom. "TELL ME, DEAREST, DO YOU WEAR  
YOUR BEAUTY-TREATMENT MASK ALL THE TIME?"

The Girl with the Mask . . . MISS JOAN COLLIER.  
John . . . MR. GODFREY KENTON.



ever-flowing stream of Napoleon brandy. Or so it seemed to me, biased, I confess, by the apparent necessity of wearing a pistol all the time in order to get in the last word with snakes and the more vermicular neighbours.

Victoria, the *châtelaine* of La Paz, was in the habit of referring to herself humorously as a League of Nations, on account of the liberally international character of her past. Not all her *démarches* had been, as it were, officially recognized, but many of them had borne fruit, as grandchildren studded over most of the globe stood witness. She was a vain old lady, expectant of flattery and silkily dictatorial. A previous marriage had brought her the rich estate of La Paz, and now she was settled there in the grand manner with a charming middle-aged French husband, who was the only truly intelligent person in the whole play, and not merely because he spent six months of the year in Paris.

There were two things to be said for her: that she had a certain wit, quick though limited, and that she had a genuine affection for the young. For the middle-aged, her children, she had small use, but her grandchildren, resident and visiting, adored her. And when *Felicia*, her favourite, insisted against the best advice on tying herself up with the handsome scion of an idiotically feudal house inhabiting the near mountains, she supported her gamely and defied all the main canons of Costa Rican convention, which seem to include the fixed rule that once married a wife is bound body and soul as a mere chattel even to the most sinister and brutal of husbands.

Which was, unfortunately, just what *Vicente* turned out to be, and bent, moreover, in the silly fashion of some men, on the production at all costs of a son to perpetuate his cigar-band name. Not once, but twice, did a pale and terrified *Felicia* escape and seek refuge with her sympathetic grandmother—once to give birth to an early baby and nearly die of it, and once, riding desperately through a Costa Rican hurricane (arriving with miraculously dry hair and breeches over which a tea-cup had perhaps been spilt), to warn a nice young American who loved her that *Vicente* had a bullet waiting for him. Five minutes later *Vicente*

drew up in his motor-car, bringing the bullet, but before he could dispatch it *Felicia's* old nurse (a splendid peasant-Nanny—Miss STELLA RHO) had very sensibly shot him dead.

Even after that we were still up against the stern code of Costa Rica,



THE OLD BIRD WITH YOUNG FEATHERS.

Comtesse Victoria Rochecourt  
MISS LILIAN BRAITHWAITE.

which demanded *Felicia's* permanent residence with her detested and detesting in-laws; but the difficulty blew over and the sharp-shooting Nanny was left sitting fairly pretty after Granny *Victoria* had bribed and bullied



SOMETHING THAT BLEW IN FROM THE STREET.

Alcalde . . . . . MR. GEORGE HOWE.

the local Mayor (if that is the correct translation of "*Alcáide*") into quiescence. And the play ended with the sealing of the romance between *Felicia* and her American at the wedding of one of the English grandsons to one of the Spanish grand-daughters—a wedding which had a special interest for us, in that *Ana*, whose eyes were set defiantly on a nunnery, had been consistently rude to *Hugh*, whose method of overcoming this ambition we wondered at but were not shown.

In parts the play is amusing, but on the whole its material is thin stuff for three Acts. If any unusual depth of character had been accorded to *The Lady of La Paz*, if there had been any real conflict of emotions, then it might have stayed the course; but *Victoria*, allowing for her sympathy and eccentricity, was a shallow creature, and the situations smacked of the machine. I tired of her unrelenting determination to hold the floor. The monotony of the part was too much even for the polished attack of Miss LILIAN BRAITHWAITE, who, entertaining though she often was, relied too much on mannerism and sought variety too little.

On one evening's showing Miss NOVA PILBEAM lacked the range needed by *Felicia*. Her personality is attractive, but she must learn to play a part like this in a play like this on a much larger scale. Mr. ANTHONY IRELAND had little to do as *Vicente*, and did it exquisitely; and Mr. PAUL LEYSSAC as *Victoria's* husband promised such a delicious slice of French maturity that his rôle of conjugal yes-man was very disappointing.

The setting of the drawing-room at La Paz was so charming that I observed it all evening with delight. Mr. J. GOWER PARKS was its author. ERIC.

#### Warning to Wantons.

"THE IMPROPER  
DUCHESS  
ON ICE  
IN A MONASTERY GARDEN."  
Cinema Programme.

"The sunfish as a rule basks about eighteen inches under the surface, and the fin of this one was visible all the time it was in sight."—Report of seaside incident.

After which, to our astonishment, it disappeared.

## More Letters to the Secretary of a Golf Club.

*From Ezekiel Higgs, Links Road, Roughover.*

15th June, 1936.

DEAR SIR,—What on earth has come over the caddies? They are going from bad to worse—dawdling behind, deliberately handing one the wrong club, giving incorrect information about the line to the hole, and behaving generally as if they were Communists at a Conservative meeting.

Unless I am greatly mistaken there is trouble brewing.

Yours faithfully,  
E. HIGGS.

*From the Undersigned, Caddies at Roughover Golf Club.*

15th June, 1936.

DEAR SIR,—This is a round robin and it is for to say we is to come out on strike to-morrow A.M. for sure, and it is all along of the way we is treated for the money.

Now Sir, for years we has stood more than many a martyr for the money, and we might be divots for the way we is treated and when we grown ones has our ears boxed for one-and-sixpence a round it is getting beyond a joke.

Well Sir, here is a list of what members and others has done to us this week and if proof was needed we can supply it.

*Alf Humpitt.* Shaken in bunker at 5th by General Forcursue until his teeth fell out into the sand and he near lost them in the scuffle.

*Geo. Humpitt.* Mr. Nutmeg threatened him that he would put his head into the tee-box and keep it there, and all along of for not finding Mr. Nutmeg's ball which he drove into the field of oats at the 13th.

*Willie Potter.* Was made to run up and down the 18th fairway four times after caddying a full round because he was not able to keep up with Admiral Styrmie and all along of his being in the hands of the Dr. under treatment for his bunions.

*Snoopy Hutchinson.* Had a putter flung at him by a visitor name of Crookedshanks and it raised a bruise on his uncle which can be seen by appointment.

*G. Smith.* Had his ears pulled for not being able to tell if it was 10 or 11 strokes Mr. Nutmeg had taken in the cross-bunker at the 4th.

*Dickie Hogg.* Was given 5 minutes off General Forcursue's bad tongue for not touching his cap (military style),

and for not calling him "Sir" when he holed a long putt at the 9th.

*Pug McCormick.* Was tripped up by Commander Nettle (Pug says it was deliberate) when Pug found Commander Nettle's opponent's ball in the rough when it was lost and Commander had previous trodden it into a tuft of grass intentional.

Well Sir, we could put down a lot more but most of it is not writable on clean paper as it would aggravate us as much to send it as it would be for you to receive same.

So Sir, this will be all for the present, and if you was to see that our pay was raised from 1/6 to 2/- it would help us to see reason.

Yours faithfully,

ALF HUMPIITT, WILLIE POTTER,  
TOM HUTCHINSON, GEORGE HUMPIITT,  
GERALD SMITH, R. HOGG,  
FRANK MCCORMICK.

*From John Baggs, Caddiemaster Roughover Golf Club.*

16th June, 1936.

MR. WHILK, DEAR SIR,—I am in a fair stew about the letter the caddies sent yesterday, but Sir I tried to get it stopped and now Sir, I am in a rare sweat along of it all, feeling you and the Members may think it all my doing.

But, Sir, their request is not without something on their side, for they has a main lot to bear and here's hoping as how things may turn up trumps in the end.

Well Sir, this is to say that you should give them the extra money as they means business O.K.

Your obedient servt.,  
JOHN BAGGS.

*From General Sir Armstrong Forcursue, K.B.E., C.S.I., Captain Roughover Golf Club. (By hand.)*

17th June, 1936.

SIR,—What in the name of fortune have you been doing upsetting the caddies the way you have? I went to get one this morning (you were out at the time) and Baggs said they had gone on strike. This is but one more example of your gross incompetence, and you will pay dearly for it.

What is all the trouble about, anyway? Baggs referred me to you and pretended he knew nothing, giving me to understand that he had lost his nerve.

See that you summon a Committee Meeting immediately to deal with the matter.

Yours faithfully,  
ARMSTRONG FORCURSUE.

*From Lionel Nutmeg, Malayan Civil Service (Retired), Old Buck's Cottage, Roughover.*

17th June, 1936.

DEAR SIR,—I hear there is a Caddie Strike on, and I am writing to warn you that the only way to deal with this is by taking immediate action, using disciplinary measures.

In the East I had similar trouble with the native boys in my bungalow, and I personally bastinadoed the lot and cut their pay.

What do the caddies want to strike for? I can think of no more pleasant way of spending a morning and afternoon than walking quietly round watching people like myself going through one purgatory after another.

Of course if it is a question of money, and they have to caddy for Sneyring-Stymie and Forcursue, I do feel the present rate of pay rather small.

Yours faithfully,  
LIONEL NUTMEG.

*From Admiral Charles Sneyring-Stymie, C.B., The Bents, Roughover.*

18th June, 1936.

DEAR SIR,—Why are the caddies on strike? Rumour says it is because they are not treated humanely, but this is all my eye; and in any case, if you are benevolent to these sort of people they never understand it and things only go from bad to worse.

I can foresee that if you yield to their demands you will have a situation arising similar to all this League business at Geneva. However, if it is a matter of money, I think their case is not wholly unjustifiable, as I can think of no more ghastly way of spending a day than caddying for Nutmeg and Forcursue.

Yours faithfully,  
C. SNEYRING-STYMIE.

*From John Baggs, Caddiemaster Roughover Golf Club.*

19th June, 1936.

MR. WHILK, DEAR SIR,—Well Sir, I was right glad to hear the Committee had agreed to give the caddies the extra threepence a round, and although they asked for 6d. this will be all right I am sure as they said they was putting the figure high in view of the fact that the Committee would have to save its face a bit. (This last remark is Private.)

Yours obedient servt.,  
JOHN BAGGS.

*From the Undersigned, Caddies at Roughover Golf Club.*

19th June, 1936.

DEAR SIR,—This is to thank you Sir, for all you has done for us ones in

getting us a raise in pay and we is all very pleased about it. Hoping you continue in the Pink.

Yours affectionately,  
 ALF HUMPHITT, WILLIE POTTER,  
 TOM HUTCHINSON, GEORGE HUMPHITT,  
 GERALD SMITH, R. HOGG,  
 FRANK MCCORMICK.

P.S.—Alf had his ear cut by the General's niblick this morning and his nose made to bleed along of his sniffing, but it will be all right as the General gave him a 6d. tip along of the extra 3d.

From General Sir Armstrong Forcursue,  
 K.B.E., C.S.I., Captain Roughover  
 Golf Club.

23rd June, 1936.

MY DEAR WHELK,—The caddies seem more amenable than they have been for years, and I consider the extra threepence to be well worth it.

You might make discreet inquiries through Baggs as to how far I could go with them for a reasonable tip, as I have always found my being able to work off my feelings on a caddie distinctly stimulating to my game.

Yours very sincerely,  
 ARMSTRONG FORCURSUE.

P.S.—Stymie and Nutmeg concur with me, and they are on for a definite agreement, but naturally we must all have our *quid pro quo*. Perhaps you would be good enough to report on the following scale as a possible basis for negotiation:—

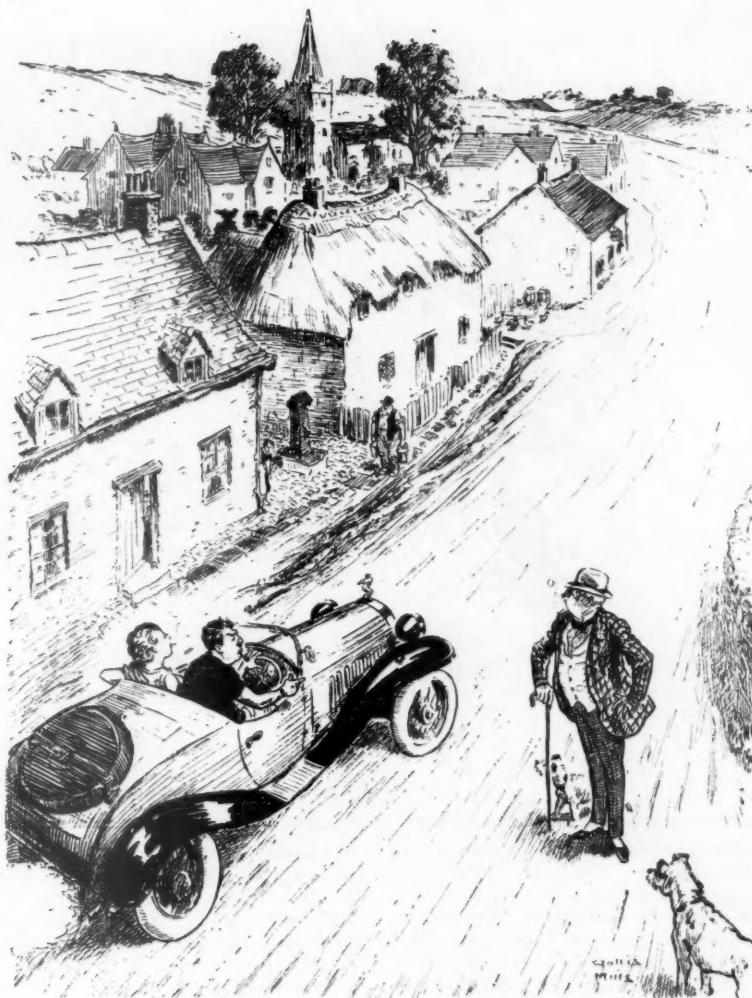
#### CADDIE TARIFF (TIPS).

Cursing at (Foreign Tongue)	1d. per minute
Cursing at (English)	2d. per minute
Bruises (Small)	3d. each
Bruises (Large)	4d. each
Cuts on Body (Blood must be drawn)	5d. per pair
Cuts on Face (Blood must be drawn)	6d. each
Two Free-Kicks (lower back only)	7d.
Thrashing with Club	8d.
Thrashing with Club (if rendered unconscious)	1/-

G. C. N.

### Swordfrog Joins the J.S.O.

WE had an informal meeting in our Mess the other day and decided that our young Lieutenant Swordfrog ought to join a London club. The suggestion had been originally made by Lieutenant Holster, who is a member of the small but conveniently situated *Junior Serving Officers*—so conveniently situated in fact that his week-end leaves become pretty expensive owing to friends from the Mess “just happening to be passing”—and the idea behind his proposal was that there should be someone else at the J.S.O. to help him



“I SAY, IF WE KEEP STRAIGHT ON THROUGH, DO WE COME TO CIVILIZATION?”

stand the strain. A brief questionnaire had revealed the fact that, except for Captain and Q.M. Ledger, Swordfrog was the only one without a club; and while the rest of the Mess—belonging as they did to clubs like the *Admiral and General* or the *Binnacle and Back-sight*—were not affected in quite the same way as Holster, they were nevertheless in thorough agreement with his proposal as doubling their chances of getting a free drink when “happening to pass” the J.S.O. Swordfrog did try to point out that Lieutenant Surcingle, also presumed clubless, might be sacrificed instead, but Surcingle unexpectedly confessed to belonging, for strategical purposes, to the same club as a rich uncle, namely, the *Senior Valetudinarians*—for which

disgracefully unmilitary conduct we at once fined him a round of drinks. The motion was then put to the meeting and carried with but one dissident—Swordfrog.

Holster, being instructed to see to the matter, immediately took the necessary steps. In due course Swordfrog's name, proposed by Holster and seconded by a friend, Lieutenant-Commander Larboard, appeared on the list of candidates; and in due course still he came up for election.

Now comes the incident that made Swordfrog's election to the J.S.O. almost unique in club annals. In fact we are rather proud of it, and are still apt to tell each other the story on guest-nights, if we can't be headed off in time.





"WHAT'S THE LOCAL RULE ABOUT CLOUDBURSTS?"

The day chosen for balloting fell in the middle of a heat-wave. The voting for the dozen or so candidates was extremely desultory, most of the members being out of town, out of the country or out of action—presumed asleep in the library. Moreover, it was in the middle of the week, when the majority of the clientèle, being—somewhat naturally—junior serving officers, was serving with its ships and regiments. At five P.M. therefore, when balloting finished, the club looked as deserted as a parade ground on Sunday afternoon.

The representatives of the committee adjourned to the voting room and proceeded to tackle the little voting boxes, each with its quota of "black" and "white" balls. Lieutenant Holster, who was a member of the committee, was very much present, the Adjutant having represented to Colonel Howitzer that the election of Swordfrog to the J.S.O. was a matter of the greatest importance to all the officers and that Holster should therefore be given a day's leave to watch Mess interests.

The votes were solemnly counted, and the candidates in turn elected or not, till at the end they came to

Swordfrog's bunch, round which Holster had been fluttering like an agitated hen. Then was made a terrible discovery. Owing to the blight which had lain on the club throughout the day there were only thirteen pills in Swordfrog's box, and it was necessary by club rules that fourteen members should have recorded their votes for a candidate to be passed. All Holster's work seemed to be undone in a flash. In an impassioned speech he explained the whole thing to those present, pointing out the urgency of the matter, the fact that Swordfrog had at any rate no black balls against him, and that it was merely the unexpected emptiness of the club which was to blame. After spirited discussion, during which Holster elicited that all present in the room had already voted for his protégé and thus could not supply the one pill required to pull him up over the line, it was decided that the voting period should be considered open for a further five minutes, while Holster despatched Lieut.-Commander Larboard to find some member who had not voted for Swordfrog and bring him along to do his stuff.

Larboard rushed off and came back

breathless and crestfallen to report that he could only find three people in the club, all of whom were reported to have voted for all the new candidates, and in any case were so sound asleep in the library that nothing short of dynamite would do any good. He then flew downstairs again, stating that he would wait by the entrance in the hope of catching someone coming in and bringing him up before it was too late.

Time passed, then with two minutes to go and Holster in an agony of apprehension, Larboard came up once more.

"The only person that's come in," he announced, "is old Colonel Wampum. I asked him if he'd come up and give a vote for—"

"What?" screamed Holster aghast. "You asked old Wampum?"

"Yes. And the blighter refused point-blank . . . Said there were enough impertinent young puppies in the club as it was."

"Gosh! what an escape!" breathed Holster. "Don't you realize that if he'd come he'd have blackballed our man? It's his one pleasure in life."

"Well, what are we to do?" Larboard was beginning, and the secretary

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"COULDN'T YOU PUT A BIT OF ICE IN IT?"

"ICE? HOW D'YOU EXPECT ME TO KEEP ICE THIS WEATHER?"

was just pointing out that there was a bare minute left, when Holster showed what stuff we Loamshires are made of. He sprang at the book of club rules, mouthed something and dashed out of the room, leaving Larboard apologizing for him and blaming the heat-wave.

Thirty seconds later Holster was murmuring confidentially in Colonel Wampum's ear. "Excuse me, Sir, but there's some voting on upstairs. I wonder if you'd do me a favour," he began, and in the teeth of an angry denial rushed on, "and come and blackball a fellow for me?"

The anger faded like mist. Wreathed in smiles, old Wampum grunted out "Delighted! Delighted!" and on the stroke of time, while Larboard was feeling quite convinced that his surmise about the heat was correct, Holster superintended the formal casting of a blackball against Swordfrog.

As old Wampum beamed out from the room like a boy-scout with his day's good deed behind him, Holster was soothing Larboard by explaining Rule IX., 2: "Fourteen members, old man, must record their votes (and they have), but since it is only one

blackball in *seven* which excludes, Swordfrog is elected."

And he was. It has already saved Holster a lot of money. Both of them, however, avoid old Wampum as much as possible, but as most other people in the club do that too it's not really noticeable. A. A.

"I know just how embarrassed you feel. There is nothing more annoying than a perpetually shiny face during lovely summer weather. I can thoroughly recommend an inexpensive blush."

*Answer to Beauty Problem.*

Then you'll be red and shiny, dear.



"HAVE YOUR PARENTS GOT A WASH-BEHIND-THE-EAR COMPLEX, TOO?"

### Our Booking-Office.

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

#### The Fifth Capital of Europe.

*Dublin Under the Georges* (HARRAP, 12/6), proudly meriting the title inscribed above, Dublin between the disastrous Boyne and the still more disastrous Union, is the theme of Miss CONSTANTIA MAXWELL's latest delightful excursion into eighteenth-century history. With much of the shapely slumdom on the banks of the Liffey doomed by town-planning, her book comes in the nick of time to record a past that adorned now crazy tenements with ceilings by ANGELICA KAUFFMANN and endowed the Irish capital with such architectural triumphs as IVORY's Blue-Coat School and GANDON's Custom House. Miss MAXWELL is creditably candid over the drawbacks to her Age of Reason: the heartless prodigality of the rich, the horrible destitution of the poor. Her pleasantest chapter is devoted to the Theatre—to SHERIDAN and MACKLIN, PEG WOFFINGTON and ANNE BELLAMY, with, incidentally, a characteristic and memorable anecdote of MACREADY and the Dublin "gods." The industries of a city neither industrial nor industrious receive sound and sympathetic handling; and the book closes with impressions of English tourists who, debarred the Grand Tour by a pugnacious Europe, diverted their puzzled and disappointed survey to John Bull's Other Island.

#### Per Ardua.

In a manner of grave and tolerant affection, as of a wise elder sister who has long left behind the impetuous chivalries

of youth, Mrs. SARAH GERTRUDE MILLIN carries forward in her second volume the life-story of that ever virile knight-errant and philosopher, *General Smuts* (FABER AND FABER, 18/-). In these chapters the Great War comes to its climax and declines, with SMUTS ever busy in Cabinet meetings, departmental committees, strike settlements, special missions; and the Great Peace likewise rises and falls, with JAN SMUTS, still growing in public esteem, labouring hard in conferences and conventions. He is the first to denounce Versailles, and the long-drawn futility of reparations is no surprise to him; yet President WILSON, main author of the Treaty, defers to his judgment in the matter of the League, every article of whose Covenant bears his impress upon it. The Irish claim his help, the Jews are his clients, he arbitrates for the Hungarians—the French are angry with him. Miraculously keeping the point and freshness of her style unimpaired to the end, the writer accompanies her protégé through it all and the stale old stuff becomes living at her touch. Even to-day when he is back in his familiar thankless South African politics she is loth to leave him without her protection. Cold, unapproachable, a man of burning stars and far distances, he carries into his unfinished story his idealist philosophy and his unflinching optimism.

#### Allegro Con Fuoco.

*True Thomas* (CAPE, 12/6) the Rhymer—with one foot on solid earth and one in the world of faërie—is a fitting patron and prototype for Dr. THOMAS WOOD the composer, whose reminiscences he sponsors. For here you have none of the customary life-sweepings of autobiography: only four characteristic aspects of a singularly full and chequered



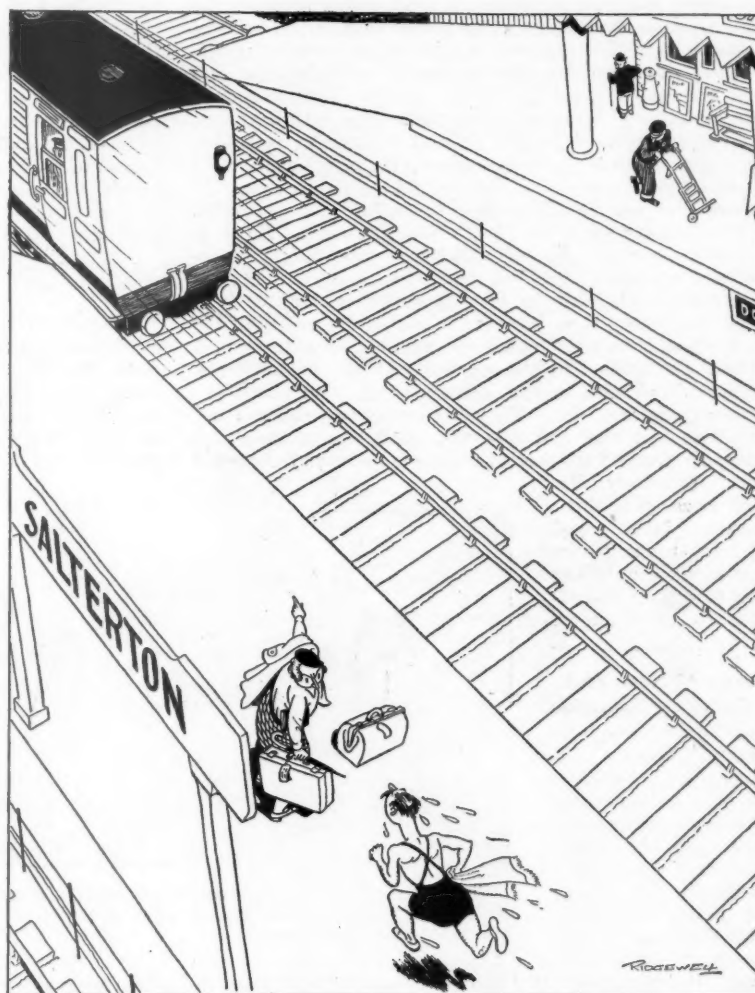
career. To the small son of a Furness master-mariner it was tragedy to find that the failing sight which absolved you from school and sent you jubilantly off in the paternal tramp utterly debarred you from following the sea as a profession. Music remained; and how Oxford was boarded, conquered and loved, first for the sake of music and last for her own, occupies section two. Section three is given over to professional meditations: how composition, for instance, which "is a choosing out, not a manufacturing," can be stimulated. Fourth and last comes an excursion into the supernatural, chiefly friendly and first-hand hauntings of voices in an old Essex house and pixy music on Dartmoor. A miscellany perhaps, this book, but a miscellany so ardent, genial, sagacious and sincere that the completeness born of artifice seems a poor thing beside it.

### The Amateur Interprets.

The central motive of Prince PETER LIEVEN's *The Birth of Ballets-Russes* (ALLEN AND UNWIN, 15/-) is the attribution (with convincing proof offered) to his friend ALEXANDRE BENOIS of an influence and achievement in the evolution of the new conception of the dramatic dance which have for various reasons, personal and tactical, been unjustly diminished in the records. He has done so without bitterness or any attempt to write down the others: and, indeed, no more discriminating summaries of the methods and triumphs of the more distinguished dancers, choreographers and decorators have been written. It was BENOIS, painter, historian, connoisseur, collector and theatre-lover, who, taking the lead in the *Mir Iskustva* "parliament," turned DIAGHILEV and his colleagues towards the ballet, and had supreme influence on the direction of the significant early experiments. Our author—the authentic amateur, instructed, perceptive and detached—has new and illuminating things to say as to matters of fact and character on a subject of which one is sometimes tempted to think more than enough has been said. DIAGHILEV's true rôle, he holds, was that of MAECENAS—"that he had no money of his own and had to find it from outside was unimportant"—rather than of impresario and entrepreneur. When success forced upon him these functions, his natural restlessness, vanity and instability and the flattery of the Parisian *précieus* betrayed him into that pursuit of novelty for novelty's sake which sowed the seeds of a new decadence. The false steps are being retraced, and Prince LIEVEN has high hopes of the ballet of to-day and a belief that England may become the creative centre of it.

### Not Strong Enough.

Throughout *The Last Enemy* (GOLLANCZ, 7/6) Mr. L. A. G. STRONG seems to be struggling to arouse interest



"I TOLD YOU THERE WASN'T HARDLY TIME FOR A FINAL BATHE!"

in a rather ineffective young man who is really too much wrapped up in his own mental processes to be particularly interesting to anyone else. The struggle is not at all times so noticeable as at other times, and there are passages in the book, though too few of them, in which the author shakes off this sense of a too difficult job and writes with the ease which his many readers expect of him. The story is of an assistant-master in a curious school at which the boys seem to be of all sizes, from those of the early preparatory to those of the public school age. An irritating point about the telling is that Mr. STRONG is apparently constantly tempted to use words which have to be indicated either with a dash alone or with a dash following an initial letter. The effort to solve these missing-word puzzles soon ceases to be amusing.

### The Skipper's Tragedy.

Mr. W. TOWNEND's *Captain Heron* (CHAPMAN AND HALL, 7/6) is a worthy successor of the same author's *Voyage*

*Without End*, and that was one of the best stories about steamboat folk ever written. His new book displays the same intimate knowledge as its predecessor of the ways of seafaring men afloat and ashore, from engine-room to bridge, of their odd semi-detached domestic arrangements and their diversions in foreign ports; and Mr. TOWNEND once more manifests his gift of writing about the most dramatic happenings with an admirable and convincing restraint. The main thread of the story concerns the relations between Captain Heron, a shipmaster of the old autocratic type, and his son Ross, whom he has signed on as third mate with him in the *Askalon* for a voyage to San Francisco. Heron is one of those stern, repressed and repressive parents more common perhaps a couple of generations ago than they are to-day, and the breaking down of his reserve is a terrible thing when it comes. It is, however, the deep humanity of the book which is its most remarkable quality, a quality which is best exemplified in the portraits of the deck-officers, engineers and crew of the *Askalon* as they go about the ordinary affairs of life. They are neither caricatured nor idealised, but one and all—Mr. Rack the unsuccessful mate, Mr. Oatfield the second engineer, "always the perfect gent," especially Mr. MacLeston the chief, decent, loyal and whisky-loving—are drawn with unfailing insight and an abundance of kindly humour.

### Queen of New York.

As most "murder-fans" now know, Mr. ELLERY QUEEN the novelist lends his name to his leading man, America's erudite detective; and the latest product of this egotistic partnership is one of the most ingeniously constructed crime-novels I have ever read. Before he lays a hand of unusual complexity on the table at the end of *Halfway House* (GOLLANCZ, 7/6), Mr. QUEEN begs his readers to put aside their guessing habits and play the game scientifically, and he challenges them before going further to put their own construction on the clues, all of which are by then at their disposal. Obediently I tried, and of course I was beaten; but others with steadier minds may be able to solve for themselves the curious murder of *Joseph Wilson* in the shack by the Delaware River. The incidents which sprang from it heaped the dramatic upon the unexpected. The trial-scenes at Trenton are brilliantly described. Ellery Queen the detective wastes neither word nor movement, and ELLERY QUEEN the writer has given us another enviable piece of work.

### A Novel for the Middle-Aged.

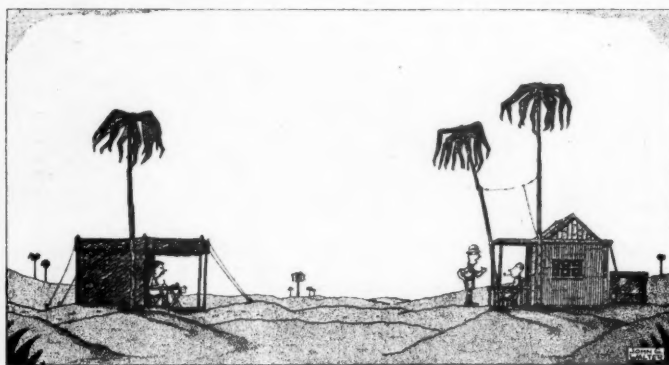
My recent reading has made me well aware what kind of sin and sorrow I was to find troubling the persons in *Cathedral Close* (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 7/6), but Miss SUSAN GOODYEAR has broken new ground in that the priest, whose fall from grace is recorded there, is not a principal or even much-loved character. The real theme is the reaction of the other clergy and their families, and of his own wife, to the discovery that Canon Carmichael is the father of an

illegitimate child who has now come, as a bride, to the city. The various characters are well differentiated and very true to cathedral life, save that perhaps—I bow to the author's superior knowledge—there might be a stronger dash of snobbishness somewhere. What I particularly like is that, in spite of a few children and a jolly minor canon and his sweetheart, almost all the characters are middle-aged or old and still extremely interesting. It seems so foolish of us, who must spend half our allotted span outside youth, to consent so readily to the frequent assumption that when its sweet-scented manuscript has closed we shall find ourselves with nothing to read.

### Lethal Chambers.

Contrary to his habit, Mr. E. R. PUNSHON seems to be more concerned with his plot than with his people in *The Bath Mysteries* (GOLLANCZ, 7/6). But those who follow *Detective-Sergeant Bobby Owen* in his efforts to thwart an exceedingly ruthless organization will have by no means an unexciting journey. Wholesale murder was being engineered, and for anyone who fell into the hands of these

clever criminals it was almost dangerous to wash and extremely hazardous to have a bath. Piquancy is gained by the fact that *Owen's* distinguished relations were connected, however remotely, with this series of crimes. But, perplexed as he often was, he put in a great deal of stout and steady work; and unadorned with frills and unencumbered by mannerisms, he is, in the opinion of one critic at least, rapidly becoming one of the most attractive personalities in



"I CAN'T HELP FEELING THAT OLD MIDDLETON IS MAKING A BIG MISTAKE. HE CAME OUT HERE TO FORGET, AND NOW, TO PASS THE TIME, HE'S TAKING A MEMORY-TRAINING COURSE."

the ever-growing pack of unmystifiable sleuths.

### Principality and Power.

Mr. EDGAR JEPSON, in *Kitty Brown's Princes* (HERBERT JENKINS, 7/6), has created yet another little Balkan state, and from it he extracts a story that can be freely recommended for holiday reading. When *Miss Brown* found herself appointed to guard *Prince Rudolph* of Pugloi against the perils and pleasures of London, she took on what may accurately be called a full-time job. He, however, danced so beautifully that she consented to marry him, and not until they arrived in Pugloi did she discover that he regarded her as his morganatic wife. Strictly speaking, I suppose that *Miss Brown* deserved all the trouble that came to her, but a rescuer was at hand who could save both her and Pugloi from the ferocious *Rudolph*; and indeed I should have been disappointed in Mr. JEPSON if he had left this spirited and amusing lady in an ambiguous position.

"The Swiss also had an advantage of 2st. a man in weight; in a tight finish, as their boat was longer, the Swiss would reach the finish first."—*Rowing Report*.

Is it too late to enter the *Queen Mary* for Berlin?